

Filter Styles

Filter Style	Description	Benefits	Drawbacks	Price Range
Carafe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic pour-through pitcher • Most use a carbon filter • Best for filtering small quantities of drinking water (CR, 2007) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inexpensive • Simple to use • Portable • No installation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some models tend to clog easily and filter slowly • Requires frequent filter changes (usually every 1-3 months) • Most filter cartridges cannot be recycled in the U.S. 	\$15 to \$60
Faucet Mount	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attaches directly to a faucet or tap (i.e. point-of-use) • Most use a carbon filter • Best for filtering drinking and cooking water (CR, 2007) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filters faster than carafes • Minimal installation effort (CR, 2007) • Can filter both drinking and cooking water • Easy to switch between filtered and unfiltered water (CR, 2007) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slows water flow • Does not fit on all faucets • Requires frequent filter changes (usually every 3 months) • Most filter cartridges cannot be recycled in the U.S. 	\$20 to \$60
Counter Top	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Either manual-fill units, or filled via a tube connected to a faucet (GG, 2007) • Typically use carbon filters or distillation • Best for filtering large quantities of water without plumbing modification (CR, 2007) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less likely to clog than carafes or faucet mounts (CR, 2007) • Some manual-fill units can fit on a refrigerator shelf for continuous chilled water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take up counter top space • Does not fit on all faucets • Most filter cartridges cannot be recycled in the U.S. 	\$50 to \$300

Under Counter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attaches to water pipes under sink and provides hot or cold filtered water through existing tap or separate faucet (GG, 2007) • Best for filtering lots of water without modifying the existing faucet or cluttering the counter (CR, 2007) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better water flow compared to faucet mount filters • Infrequent filter changes (about 2 times a year) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes up space under the counter • Requires plumbing modifications (CR, 2007) • Typically needs permanent connection to existing pipe (McEvoy, 2004) • Installation can be expensive, especially if the unit needs a separate faucet – “a hole must be drilled through the sink and/or counter top for the dispenser” (CR, 2007) • Most filter cartridges cannot be recycled in the U.S. 	\$55 to \$350
Whole House (aka Point-of-Entry or POE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Filters water at the point-of-entry to a house or building • Best for inexpensively removing sediment, rust, and for some, chlorine, from household water (CR, 2007) • Installed outside or in a basement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can prolong the life of major appliances when sediment in water is a problem (GG, 2007) • Long cartridge lifetime (CR, 2007) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineffective at removing lead, chloroform, pesticides, and bacteria (GG, 2007) • Ineffective at removing most contaminants, including pathogens, heavy metals, and VOCs (CR, 2007) • Requires professional installation (CR, 2007) • Most filter cartridges cannot be recycled in the U.S. 	\$35 to \$80

Portable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically found inside reusable water bottles or as screw-on mouthpieces for single-serving bottled water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most remove chlorine, bad tastes and odors, heavy metals including lead, mercury, and copper (GG, 2007) • Portable and convenient • Filters water from any source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short filter lifespan • Most filter cartridges cannot be recycled in the U.S. 	\$5 to \$50
Refrigerator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built into the inside or door of a refrigerator • Filters water at point-of-use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convenient, continuous water supply • Chilled water on-demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most filter cartridges cannot be recycled in the U.S. 	Refrigerators with filtration units typically cost more than those without
Multi-Stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine two or more methods of filtration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can filter a wide variety of contaminants 		Varies.